September 23, 2003

TO: Dennis Braddock, Secretary
                  Department of Social and Health Services

FROM: Marty Brown, Director

SUBJECT: Department of Social and Health Services Incident Report #03-23 Does Not Merit Review

Pursuant to RCW 43.41.370 and the Guidelines for Reporting Incidents, the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) submitted an Incident Report notifying the Office of Financial Management (OFM) that on November 14, 2002, a 16-year-old girl in Ocean Park committed suicide by hanging in her home. Her mother had an open Child Protective Services investigation at the time.

The girl had attempted suicide seven times previously and was receiving services from the local mental health center. Both mother and daughter were being treated for depression. DSHS conducted an internal child fatality review which determined that maternal abuse and neglect were not factors in this death.

RCW 43.41.370(1) requires the Director of OFM to appoint a loss prevention review team when the death of a person, serious injury to a person, or other substantial loss is alleged or suspected to be caused at least in part by the actions of a state agency unless the Director, in his discretion, determines that the incident "does not merit review". Applying the criteria for loss prevention reviews, issued November 18, 2002, I have determined this reported incident does not merit review. While there was a death, it does not appear to significantly relate to agency systems or practices. A review of the incident has been conducted and it is unlikely that an additional review would be beneficial.

This decision will be posted on the OFM website. If you have any questions about the criteria or its application to this incident, please contact either Susan Hettinger at (360) 902-9815 or Gary Robinson at (360) 902-0528.

cc: Bernie Friedman, Special Assistant Secretary, Risk Management